

BACKGROUNDER NO. 5-5536
CLAUDIO ESKENAZI

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THIS WEEK NO. 7

ANNCR:

"THIS WEEK."

FROM THE VOICE OF AMERICA, THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK GONE BY...A LOOK AT SOME OF THE EVENTS, A CROSS-SECTION OF THE IDEAS, AND THE VOICES OF SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO MADE NEWS DURING THE PAST SEVEN DAYS. YOUR NARRATOR IS-----.

NARR:

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST THIS WEEK WERE MARKED BY SIGNS OF INCREASING STRAINS IN U.S.-ISREALI RELATIONS OVER TWO ISSUES: ARMS SALES AND ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED ARAB LANDS. EARLY IN THE WEEK THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION PROPOSED THE SALE OF FIGHTER PLANES TO EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA AND ISRAEL. SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE JUSTIFIED THE PROPOSED SALES AS BEING SUPPORTIVE OF THE OVERALL AMERICAN OBJECTIVE IN THE MIDDLE EAST OF ACHIEVING A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE SETTLEMENT. HE ADDED THAT THE SALES WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE LEGITIMATE DEFENSE NEEDS OF EACH COUNTRY:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- VANCE

"WE BELIEVE ALSO THAT IT DOES NOT IN ANY WAY DISTURB THE BASIC MILITARY BALANCE IN THE AREA, AND THEREFORE IS IN NO WAY GOING TO BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE SECURITY OF EACH OF THESE COUNTRIES."

NARR:

(OP)IN THE CASE OF ISRAEL, MISTER VANCE CITED THAT COUNTRY'S NEED TO MODERNIZE ITS AIR FORCE, ADDING THAT THE PROPOSED SALES ARE IN KEEPING WITH THE FIRM U.S. COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL'S SECURITY. IN JUSTIFYING THE PROPOSED SALE OF FIGHTER PLANES TO EGYPT, MISTER VANCE SAID CAIRO MUST ALSO HAVE A REASONABLE ASSURANCE OF ITS ABILITY TO DEFEND ITSELF IF IT IS TO CONTINUE THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH CONFIDENCE.

IN THE CASE OF SAUDI ARABIA, THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION NOTED THAT COUNTRY'S IMPORTANT ROLE AS A SOURCE OF MODERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, BOTH IN THE PEACEKEEPING EFFORT AND ON QUESTIONS OF OIL AND FINANCIAL POLICY.

THE PROPOSED SALE OF FIGHTER PLANES TO EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA IS LIKELY TO STIR A HEATED DEBATE IN CONGRESS, WHICH HAS THIRTY DAYS TO VETO THE PROPOSAL AFTER FORMAL NOTIFICATION FROM THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. SEVERAL CONGRESSMEN HAVE ALREADY ANNOUNCED THEIR OPPOSITION AND, IN THE SENATE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, JOHN SPARKMAN, REFUSED TO PREDICT HOW IT WILL VOTE ON THE ISSUE, BUT HE DOES NOT THINK THE SENATE WILL MOVE TO BLOCK THE SALES. SENATOR CLIFFORD CASE, ON THE OTHER HAND, SAID THERE ARE SERIOUS QUESTIONS AS TO WHETHER THE PROPOSED SALE TO SAUDI ARABIA OF SIXTY OF THE MOST ADVANCED AND POWERFUL FIGHTER BOMBERS DOES NOT EXCEED THAT COUNTRY'S LEGITIMATE DEFENSE NEEDS.

(END OPT)

IN JERUSALEM, ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER MENACHEM BEGIN WARNED THAT THE PROPOSED SALES TO EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA WOULD ENDANGER WORLD PEACE, AND HE CALLED ON PRESIDENT CARTER TO RECONSIDER HIS DECISION. MISTER BEGIN ADDED THAT THE SALE OF MODERN OFFENSIVE AIRCRAFT TO SAUDI ARABIA WOULD TURN THAT COUNTRY INTO A FIRST-LINE CONFRONTATION STATE. AND HE SAID THIS WOULD ENDANGER ISRAEL'S SECURITY.

ANOTHER ISSUE THAT HAS SPARKED CONTROVERSY BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES IS THE PRESENCE OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORY. LAST WEEK, SECRETARY VANCE SAID THE SETTLEMENTS ARE CONTRARY TO INTERNATIONAL LAW AND CONSTITUTE AN OBSTACLE TO PEACE. IN A RESPONSE THIS WEEK, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT CHARGED THAT THE UNITED STATES IS SIDING WITH EGYPT

IN THE MIDDLE EAST DISPUTE. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN ALSO INSISTED THAT THE ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE SINAI WERE, IN HIS WORDS, "LEGAL, LEGITIMATE AND VERY ESSENTIAL TO THE SECURITY AND DEFENSE OF ISRAEL."

IN WASHINGTON, SECRETARY VANCE DENIED ISRAEL'S CHARGE:

TAPE: CUT TWO -- VANCE

"NO, WE CERTAINLY ARE NOT TAKING SIDES AGAINST ISRAEL. I BELIEVE HE (PRIME MINISTER BEGIN) WAS REFERRING TO SOME ANSWERS I GAVE AT MY PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE END OF LAST WEEK IN WHICH I MERELY REPEATED A NUMBER OF STATEMENTS WHICH I HAVE MADE PUBLICLY BEFORE AND HAVE SAID PRIVATELY ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS TO THE ISRAELIS. THEY REFLECT VIEWS OF THE UNITED STATES, AND WE CERTAINLY ARE NOT TAKING ANY SIDES AND WE'RE TRYING TO WORK AMONG AND BETWEEN THE PARTIES TO BRING THEM TOGETHER."

NARR:

WHILE THERE WERE FEW POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN A MIDDLE EAST PEACE SETTLEMENT THIS WEEK, EVENTS IN RHODESIA SEEMED TO BE POINTING TOWARD AN INTERNAL AGREEMENT IN THAT COUNTRY. PRIME MINISTER IAN SMITH AND MODERATE BLACK LEADERS ANNOUNCED IN SALISBURY THAT THEY HAVE AGREED ON THE FRAMEWORK FOR A MULTI-RACIAL INTERIM GOVERNMENT. THIS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A MAJORITY RULE CONSTITUTION AND ELECTIONS ON THE BASIS OF ONE MAN, ONE VOTE. MISTER SMITHER SAID THERE ARE STILL SOME PROBLEMS REMAINING TO BE SOLVED, BUT HE SOUNDED OPTIMISTIC:

TAPE: CUT THREE -- SMITH

"(THIS IS A) VICTORY FOR MODERATION. INSTEAD OF FIGHTING AND KILLING PEOPLE, WE'VE SHOWN PATIENCE, AND IT'S HELPING US TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEM TOWARD BRINGING PEACE TO RHODESIA."

NARR:

A COMPROMISE OVER WHITE REPRESENTATION IN A NEW RHODESIAN PARLIAMENT SUCCEEDED IN BREAKING LAST WEEK'S DEADLOCK. (OPT) BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA AGREED TO A NEW FORMULA WHEREBY RHODESIA'S WHITE MINORITY WILL BE ABLE TO BLOCK ANY PARLIAMENTARY MOVE TO CHANGE THE NEW CONSTITUTIONAL SETUP. BISHOP MUZOREWA EXPLAINED HIS COMPROMISING STAND:

TAPE: CUT FIVE -- MUZOREWA

"THAT IS BECAUSE WE'VE OVERCOME ONE OF THE HURDLES THAT WAS SLOWING US DOWN." (END OPT)

NARR:

ACCORDING TO THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, IAN SMITH AND THE THREE BLACK NATIONALIST GROUPS WILL HAVE THE TASK OF COMPLETING A MAJORITY-RULE CONSTITUTION UNDER AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. THE GROUP WILL ALSO PREPARE FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS, AND SEEK A CEASEFIRE WITH GUERRILLA FORCES AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION. HOWEVER, JOSHUA NKOMO, CO-LEADER OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WHICH CONTROLS THE GUERRILLA FORCES, SAID THE RHODESIAN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WILL NOT WORK. "THE WAR CONTINUES", HE SAID, "AND NOW WE KNOW WHO THE ENEMIES ARE."

IN WASHINGTON, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SAID THIS WEEK IT WILL STUDY THE NEW RHODESIAN AGREEMENT. BUT A SPOKESMAN NOTED THAT THE UNITED STATES STILL SUPPORTS THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL FOR SETTLEMENT ANNOUNCED LAST YEAR. U.S. AMBASSADOR AT THE UNITED NATIONS, ANDREW YOUNG, CRITICIZED THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT FOR NOT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE GUERRILLA FORCES. MISTER YOUNG ADDED THAT THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN IAN SMITH AND THE THREE INTERNAL LEADERS IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO INTENSIFIED FIGHTING IN RHODESIA:

TAPE: CUT SIX -- YOUNG

"THE PROBLEM IS THAT WE'VE HAD EVIDENCE THAT THERE WOULD BE A MASSIVE COMMITMENT OF SOVIET WEAPONS AS THERE WERE IN ANGOLA. AND SO WHAT YOU'VE DONE REALLY IS NOT SETTLED THE SITUATION, BUT YOU'VE CREATED A BLACK ON-BLACK CIVIL WAR."

NARR:

(OPT) WHILE TALKS WERE GOING ON IN SALISBURY, ATTEMPTS WERE BEING MADE IN NEW YORK TO ACHIEVE MAJORITY RULE IN ANOTHER AFRICAN STATE: NAMIBIA. EARLIER THIS WEEK FOREIGN MINISTERS OF FIVE WESTERN COUNTRIES MET WITH SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICIALS AND

REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE SWAPO GUERRILLA GROUP. THE FIVE WESTERN MINISTERS REPORTED SOME PROGRESS AT THE TALKS DESPITE THE SUDDEN DEPARTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S FOREIGN MINISTER ROELOF BOTHA. THE MINISTER WENT HOME SAYING HE COULD GO NO FURTHER IN THE DISCUSSIONS WITHOUT CONSULTING HIS GOVERNMENT. MISTER BOTHA AGREED THAT SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE, BUT WARNED THERE ARE ASPECTS OF THE WESTERN PLAN THAT COULD LEAD TO DESTRUCTION IN NAMIBIA:

TAPE: CUT SEVEN -- BOTHA

"I'M READY TO COOPERATE. I'M READY TO BE A PARTY TO THE FULL INDEPENDENCE OF SOUTHWEST AFRICA BASED ON ONE-MAN ONE-VOTE WITH THE REMOVAL OF DISCRIMINATION BASED ON COLOR. I'M NOT PREPARED TO BE A PARTY TO THE HANDING OVER OF THAT TERRITORY TO TERRORISTS AND MARXISTS NATIONALIZING THE TERRITORY AND PUTTING IT IN ASH AND FLAME."

NARR:

MISTER BOTHA ALSO SAID THE MAIN POINTS OF DISAGREEMENT ARE OVER SOUTH AFRICAN TROOP STRENGTH IN NAMIBIA DURING A TRANSITION AND ELECTION PERIOD AND OVER THE SIZE OF A U.N. MILITARY FORCE IN THE TERRITORY. THE LEADER OF THE SWAMPO GUERRILLA GROUP, SAM NUJOMA, ALSO LEFT THE DOOR OPEN FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS:

TAPE: CUT EIGHT -- NUJOMA

"WE ARE READY FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT THAT COULD BE FOUND. BUT BE ARE ALSO READY TO CONTINUE AND CARRY OUT THE ARMED LIBERATION STRUGGLE WITH INTENSITY IN ORDER TO ENSURE TOTAL LIQUIDATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN COLONIALISM." (EMD OPT)

NARR:

IN ANOTHER CONFLICT AREA OF AFRICA, THE HORN, REPORTS THIS WEEK INDICATE THAT ETHIOPIA NOW SEEMS TO HAVE THE UPPER HAND IN ITS DRIVE AGAINST SOMALI INSURGENTS IN THE OGADEN AREA. ETHIOPIAN FORCES ARE NOW BELIEVED TO HAVE RECAPTURED MOST OF THAT DESERT REGION AS WE HEAR IN THIS REPORT FROM VOA'S CORRESPONDENT IN NAIROBI, JOHN ROBERTS:

TAPE:CUT NINE -- ROBERTS

"ETHIOPIA IS APPARENTLY GAINING GROUND IN ITS FIGHTING WITH SOMALI INSURGENTS -- AFTER SIX MONTHS OF REVERSALS AND DEFEATS. A MASSIVE INFUSION OF SOVIET ARMS AND ADVISORS -- TOGETHER WITH AN ESTIMATED THREE THOUSAND CUBAN TROOPS -- HAVE HELPED TURN THE TIDE IN ETHIOPIA'S FAVOR. DISPATCHES FROM THE SOMALI CAPITAL OF MOGADISCIO QUOTE DIPLOMATIC SOURCES AS SAYING THE SOMALIS HAVE PULLED BACK TO AREAS AROUND JIGJIGA AND THAT THIS HAS ALLOWED THE ETHIOPIANS TO CAPTURE SEVERAL STRATEGIC TOWNS. REUTER NEWS AGENCY IN MOGADISCIO SAYS THAT ETHIOPIA IS BELIEVED TO BE MOVING REINFORCEMENTS AND SUPPLIES INTO POSITION FOR AN ASSAULT ON JIGJIGA."

NARR:

LATER IN THE WEEK, ETHIOPIA'S LEADER COLONEL MENGISTU REPEATED EARLIER ASSURANCES THAT ETHIOPIA WILL NOT INVADE SOMALI TERRITORY. HE SAID THERE CAN BE NO NEGOTIATION UNTIL THE SOMALIS HAVE COMPLETELY WITHDRAWN FROM ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY. AND IN WASHINGTON IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT A TOP ASSISTANT TO NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI HAD FLOWN TO ETHIOPIA TO ASSURE THAT COUNTRY OF CONTINUED U.S. NEUTRALITY IN THE OGADEN DISPUTE.

IN THE DOMESTIC SCENE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE RESUMED TO END THE TWO-AND-A-HALF-MONTH-OLD U.S. COAL STRIKE. EARLIER IN THE WEEK PRESIDENT CARTER MET WITH COAL INDUSTRY OFFICIALS AND UNION NEGOTIATORS TO URGE THEM TO ACT QUICKLY IN RESOLVING THE DISPUTE. THE PRESIDENT MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WANTED TO ALLOW FREE BARGAINING TO SETTLE THE STRIKE BUT HE WARNED THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO ACT IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST IF IT DID NOT:

TAPE: CUT TEN -- CARTER

"I CONTINUE TO SUPPORT A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROCESS. HOWEVER, THE WELFARE OF THIS COUNTRY MUST BE MY OVERRIDING CONCERN, RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS HERE AT THE WHITE HOUSE MUST BE VIEWED AS A FINAL OPPORTUNITY FOR THIS BARGAINING PROCESS TO WORK. IF IT DOES NOT, THEN I WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT RESORT TO STRONGER MEASURES."

NARR:

PRIOR TO THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION THE STRIKE NEGOTIATIONS HAD REACHED A STANDSTILL AFTER THE MINERS' UNION BARGAINING COUNCIL REJECTED A TENTATIVE THREE-YEAR CONTRACT SETTLEMENT. EVEN IF THE RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS PRODUCE AN IMMEDIATE AGREEMENT, UNION RATIFICATION PROCEDURES AND THE TIME NEEDED TO PUT THE MINES BACK INTO OPERATION WILL DELAY RESUMPTION OF FULL-SCALE COAL PRODUCTION FOR AT LEAST ONE MONTH.

MEANWHILE POWER COMPANIES IN MANY AREAS NOW HAVE LESS THAN ONE-MONTH'S SUPPLY OF COAL ON HAND TO GENERATE ELECTRICITY. MILLIONS OF AMERICANS ARE BEING URGED TO VOLUNTARILY REDUCE ELECTRIC POWER CONSUMPTION BEFORE MANDATORY CUTBACKS HAVE TO BE IMPOSED.

IN THE SPORTS WORLD THE SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE HAPPENED THIS WEEK IN LAS VEGAS WHEN MUHAMMED ALI LOST HIS HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE TO A RELATIVE NOVICE NAMED LEON SPINKS. FOR ALI, IT WAS HIS TWENTIETH TITLE DEFENSE SINCE HE WON THE TITLE FROM SONNY LISTON IN 1964. FOR SPINKS, IT WAS ONLY HIS EIGHTH PROFESSIONAL FIGHT. SPINKS TURNED PROFESSIONAL AFTER WINNING THE OLYMPIC LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CROWN IN MONTREAL EIGHTEEN MONTHS AGO.

AFTER THE FIGHT, ALI ADMITTED TO A TACTICAL ERROR BY LETTING SPINKS DO MOST OF THE PUNCHING IN THE EARLY ROUNDS. BUT HE ACCEPTED DEFEAT GRACEFULLY:

TAPE: CUT ELECN -- ALI

(OPT) "WELL, NATURALLY YOU WANT TO GO OUT (RETIRE) WITH THE TITLE. AND I THOUGHT I BOXED WELL, REALLY. IT WAS A CLOSE FIGHT, BUT HE WAS THE MOST AGGRESSIVE, I THINK. I IMAGINE HE WON. FOR WHATEVER REASON HE TOOK IT (THE TITLE), HE TOOK IT. YOU CAN'T TAKE THAT FROM HIM (DENY IT). I WOULD LIKE TO DO SOMETHING THAT'S NEVER BEEN DONE BEFORE, AND THAT'S TO BE THE THIRD MAN TO REGAIN THE TITLE. BUT IT'S (LOSING THE TITLE) JUST ANOTHER EXPERIENCE IN LIFE. IT'S NOTHING TO CRY ABOUT."

ANNCR:

AND THOSE ARE SOME OF THE STORIES THAT MADE HEADLINES THIS WEEK. YOUR NARRATOR WAS ----- JOIN US AGAIN NEXT ----- WHEN THE VOICE OF AMERICA TAKES A LOOK AT THE NEXT SEVEN DAYS OF THE WEEK.

JS/RCS/PY